R&A 2204
097.3
21092
no. 2 204

SECRET

Office of Strategic Services

Research and Analysis Branch

R & A NO. 2204

THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT IN DENMARK

11 May 1944

"This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Act, 50 USC 31 and 32, as amended. Its transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law."

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF LIBRARY
AND
REFERENCE SERVICES
OCT 14 1949
LR FILE COPY
PLEASE RETURN

SECRET

THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT IN DENMARK

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The character of the Danish resistance is constituted (a) in its unpolitical nature, which is derived from the unwillingness of any permanent political organization to participate as such in the resistance, and (b) in the peculiar combination of individuals, predominantly from Conservative and Communist groups, which have taken over its leadership. Reasons for these traits are to be found in the Danish social and political background and in the pattern of the German occupation.

The Danish social background, resting upon a fortunate natural and economic situation, is marked by a singular lack of class tension. The economy is dominated by a productive agriculture of the small independent holding type. Modern industry developed late, and through the rapid establishment of trade unions, founded upon a ready-made Social Democratic ideology and British tactic, the workers never experienced a period of profound misery which would have developed a feeling of class exclusiveness. The coincidence of the development of the trade union with the process of political democratization in the early part of the 20th century established a tradition of economic and political collaboration with the bourgeoisie, which has never lost its force. Thus the basis of Danish labor law remains an agreement of 1899 between the central Danish

trade union organizations and the employers' organizations providing for trade union recognition and the establishment of voluntary arbitration tribunals. As a result revolutionary movements like syndicalism and communism have had very little influence on Danish labor, which has organized itself politically into a Social Democratic Party of a revisionist character, in which the socialist revolutionary aim has almost entirely disappeared behind the striving for immediate social benefits. While the actual organizational connection between the trade unions and the Social Democratic Party is not so close in Denmark as in other Scandinavian countries, still the similarity of purpose between the amalgamated or federated union which characterized the Danish labor movement, and the revisionist Social Democracy created the basis for close collaboration. This characteristic of the Social Democratic Party has been confirmed by the support it has had from small-holding agrarian groups through the co-operative movement. Hence it has not gone all out for a radical workers' program. Since practical improvements were its goal, Danish Social Democracy has not been averse to cooperating with bourgeois groups to attain that goal. The precedent was set early, for during the first World War the Social Democrat Stauning joined the Danish Cabinet in spite of the fact that no national crisis existed to justify such a step. In the years that followed, the struggle

of the Social Democrats for political power drove them into the coalitions demanded by the 'bloc' system. They dominated the more or less constant coalition on the left which included the Radical Party against the Conservatives and the Leftist Party. In 1929 the Social Democrats formed a government including the Radicals in a subordinate capacity and remained in power until the occupation in 1940.

Their program in these years was that of a broad democratic rather than of a socialist party. They stood for close association with cooperatives, the parcelling of large estates (to attract the small land-holders), universal suffrage, abolition of the upper chamber, progressive taxation, and government control of industry and commerce. In foreign policy, they stood for disarmament and for keeping on good terms with Germany. The chief results of their long stay in power were a series of social reforms, which characteristically were based on old Danish experience and practise, and the signing of a non-agression pact with Germany in May 1939. The sacrifice of principle for the practical results of state power was clearly revealed when the plebiscite on the government proposal for the liberalization of the constitution failed to gain the necessary votes and Stauning, the Social Democratic Prime Minister failed to resign.

The conditions which created such a moderate party on the extreme left bred the same patterns in the other parties. Just

as there was no revolutionary left, there was no revolutionary right. The Conservative Party represented a great variety of interests among the upper classes, and stood for such generalities as the preservation of private initiative and private property, a protective tariff, a strong national defense utilizing cooperation with the other Scandinavian countries. In spite of its strongly nationalistic character as contrasted with the internationalism and pacifism of the Social Democracy, it could and did collaborate in governments with the Social Democrats.

Of the two center parties, the Radicals represented in general the city liberals and cooperated habitually with the Social Democrats, while the Leftist Party, which represented land-owning, business and professional groups, had a moderate program calling for economy in social legislation and an adequate national defense. Extremist action parties, like the Communists on the Left and the Danish Unity Party (Dansk Samling) on the right, never gained the support of any important social forces in this political-social scene dedicated to institutional, moderate, peaceful activity. This is especially important, for it was precisely these action groups which later could, by reason of their very lack of support, divest themselves of their distinguishing principles and become the focus of active resistance against the invader.

The pattern of the German occupation in Denmark, acting upon this social and political situation, has had the effect of

encouraging these political institutions in their concern for the maintenance of their organizations and for the securing of immediate results, as opposed to the pursuit of a policy of principle. When the Germans announced the protective nature of their invasion and their determination not to interfere in the Danish government on 9 April 1940, and proceeded to set up a pattern of administration by alliance with a view to establishing Denmark in the eyes of Europe as the model protectorate of the Germanic New Order, the Danish Social Democratic Government accepted the situation "under protest". The other major parties quickly followed suit and a Coalition Government, including representatives of the four parties, based upon a parliamentary coalition of the four parties plus a fifth smaller party-- the Justice League--was formed to administer Denmark for the duration. Politics were shelved and the administration was run on the basis of collaboration with the Germans to preserve as much as possible of Danish institutions.

For more then three years the Germans, under the influence of a relatively relaxed military situation in the west and a racial policy exalted by the plenipotentiary sent to Denmark in November 1942--Werner Best--, could mask their exploitation and control of the country by means of the cover of the collaboration of the Danish government. The conflicts in this period between occupant and occupied took place in peripheral spheres; that is, they did not touch what the leading social and political forces

of Denmark considered essential to the existence of their organizations. Political parties and their youth organizations, trade unions and cooperative associations, industrial and trade organizations were all untouched directly by the Germans, who preferred to exploit by means of offering high prices charged to the occupation account and to exert pressure by threatening to withhold vital coal supplies. The Danes yielded in this period in such matters as the adherence to the anti-Comintern pact, the banning of the Communist Party and the arrest of its leaders, the transfer of torpedo boats to the Germans, in individual penal cases while maintaining the institutions of Danish administration of justice, and in changes of Cabinet. This involved the displacement of the Social Democratic Prime Minister and the reduction of the Social Democratic representation in the Cabinet to three but did not touch the structure of the Party. All these things the Danish leaders accepted as not essential to the Danish system, and in return for the German restraint, co-operated in restraining the people from resistance to the occupant. All the parties in the Coalition, collectively and individually, issued periodic appeals for obedience to the original proclamations for the keeping of order and fought for the right to punish resistance in order to save themselves as institutions. The Social Democracy and the Trade Unions

fulminated against strikes and sabotage.[1] The Council of Industry added its pressure to the Danish Government's upon individual recalcitrants for the acceptance of German orders.[2]

---

1. In August 1942 the Trade Union Confederation warned its workers against striking. In September 1942 both Buhl, the Social Democratic Prime Minister and Laurits Hansen, a trade Union Social Democratic leader, appealed against sabotage. Hansen used the traditional argument that sabotage had never been a trade union weapon. Social Democratic policy was revealed strikingly by a refugee Social Democratic journalist in Stockholm in November 1943: The invasion was a blow to the Danish labor movement not only because of the catastrophe to the nation but because the social work of the labor movement was in danger of being checked; this was felt especially because labor was beginning to enjoy the fruits of its organizational work; the paralysis soon passed and "all forces were concentrated on saving what could be saved within the framework of the conditions of 9 April", with efforts especially directed to maintaining the democratic form of government. The labor organizations, reports this journalist, were used to "enlighten" the population by showing the necessity of following the Social Democratic policy of collaboration. The journalist concludes by announcing proudly the increase in the trade union and the political labor organizations during the occupation and its record-breaking meeting activity for that period. (CID 58892-R). Nor were the Social Democrats above using the Communist bogey to maintain order within labor. They identified Communism with anti-democratic forces, and strikers and saboteurs with Communist provocation.
2. For a detailed account of pressure of the Danish government and the Danish Council of Industry upon a reluctant firm to accept German war orders, see CID 57781-C. In this connection it should be noted that Gunnar Larsen, the most pro-German member of the Coalition Cabinet, and one who pressed for industrial collaboration with Germany was himself a cement industrialist.

The entire leadership of Denmark, as embodied in its institutional life, from the King down arrayed itself against active resistance to the Germans.

II. DANISH RESISTANCE UNTIL AUGUST 1943

The failure of the political and social institutions to support active resistance gave the resistance movement its dominant characteristics: it was spontaneous, it lacked central organization, it signified a gap between those who resisted and their institutions, it was concerned entirely with the issue of resistance to the occupant and was joined to no traditionally important political or social force. Hence, it was the extreme left and the extreme right, action groups which had represented no concrete Danish interests, which naturally gravitated to the leadership of the active opposition and formed nuclei for it. As a result, the nuclei around which the resistance gathered were simply those groups which were capable of directing it. They were groups which had detached themselves from their distinguishing principles, which they could easily do since they represented no strong force in Danish life, and rallied around themselves support on a supra-political basis, from any elements that would oppose the invader. These nuclei came overwhelmingly from radical Conservative and Communist camps, and their ad hoc collaboration indicated their mutual recognition of their temporary identity of principle and of

interest as well as their mutual recognition that each was present only as a formal activist principle with no social content. It was precisely because the extreme right and the extreme left represented the activist principle but no important Danish social force that they could become the centers of resistance.

A. The Conservatives

The Conservative Party as an institution adhered to the coalition policy of collaboration, and many of the rooted elements in it, like the large land-holders and industrialists collaborated economically with the Germans. However, the leadership of Christmas Moeller in the 30's had tried to drive the Conservative Party from the representation of particular class forces into a dynamic, progressive policy which could represent various national interests on a supra-party basis. Hence some sections of the Conservatives dedicated themselves to a policy of active nationalism transcending specific economic and social interests. This nationalism gave the Conservatives a traditional interest in the conduct of foreign affairs, and also gave them a position close to the Danish armed forces. After a short period of reluctant participation in the Coalition Cabinet as Conservative Minister of Trade (July 1940-October 1940) followed by a period of organization of active resistance within Denmark, Christmas Moeller escaped to England in May 1942. He

became the head of the Free Danish movement, which had been formed by the Danes abroad as the Council of Denmark in 1940. From that time onward, he has preached active resistance to the Danes via the BBC and has sought to keep in contact with activist political groups of all complexions, including the Communists, but especially with the Conservatives.

That the Germans have recognized the outstanding danger of the traditional nationalism of the conservatives is revealed by the fact that they have tended to arrest more of the Conservative leaders than of any other political group outside the Communists.

The nationalistic character of this branch of the Conservatives, concentrated upon the formal principle of active resistance to the invader, is revealed in their unreserved collaboration with the Communists with whom they collaborated in various resistance organizations, including even collaboration in the publishing of the same illegal press organ. As one of the activists phrased it: the Nazi danger is present; we can deal with the Soviet danger later if it should arise; the nationalists feel themselves obliged not to let the Communists be alone in this work of fighting for Danish independence.[1]

---

1. CID 49335-R.

Although there is little direct evidence at hand to support it, a further cause of conservative active resistance may be advanced: The one important Danish economic interest that has been grievously injured by the German occupation has been her ocean shipping. Denmark's best market for her agricultural export before the war was Great Britain, and her ocean-going merchant fleet was of sufficient size to be of concern to Great Britain. Great Britain's appeal for Danish shipping to proceed to Allied ports met with considerable Danish response, and the Danish shipping pool in the service of the Allies is now administered by a Danish committee, that is, by Free Danes. Thus the self-preservative habits of Danish economic forces, which in other fields impelled them to collaborate with the Germans, in this case became an influence for active resistance and drove the shipping interests into the arms of the actively resisting conservatives as representatives of the Danish national interests. It may not be mere coincidence in this respect that Christmas Moeller's cabinet position in the Coalition Cabinet was that of Minister of Trade, Industry and Shipping.

The Danish Unity Party was the only organized political party that advocated active resistance to the Germans. This Party, which is a radical rightist party, represents no real social force in Denmark (in the elections of 1939 it could secure not even one parliamentary seat). Since the occupation

it has served simply as a branch of the conservative activism and has gained in numbers and influence by virtue of its existence as an organized conservative nucleus on the spot.

Its history is an index of the character of the active conservative opposition. It was founded in 1936 on a program of such extreme nationalism as to be semi-Fascist in nature: It was strongly anti-Communist, friendly to National Socialism, rejected the Danish party system, and emphasized national defense, especially through Scandinavian unity. The German invasion, however, provoked the nationalism inspiring this group to jettison its Fascist principles and to undertake a program of unconditional opposition to the German occupant. From 1940 on, the Danish Unity Party, led by Arne Soerensen, collaborated very closely with Christmas Moeller in the organization of underground resistance, and even cooperated with Communists in this work. In the elections of March 1943 this party secured 45,000 votes (a four-fold gain over 1939) and gained three seats in the Lower House. However, as the only native conservative political organization of resistance, its influence in resistance circles, especially in view of the close relations between Soerensen and Christmas Moeller, has exceeded its numerical strength. Its gains have been from the middle classes, from the clergy and from the People's High Schools.

B. The Communists

The Communists form the other great focal point around which resistance to the Germans has gathered. Communism has always been weak in Denmark both because of the paucity of industrial workers and because of the revisionist character of the trade union federations and the severe anti-Communism of the Social Democracy which led labor. In 1939 the Danish Communist Party polled 40,000 votes to secure three seats in the Lower House. The attitude of the Communists during the period from April 1940 to June 1941 is not clear, but there are reports which maintain that many of them did not follow the party line and collaborated immediately with other activists against the Germans.[1] Since, however, Danish active resistance was sporadic and infrequent until the fall of 1942, and since the Danish Communists have since followed the Moscow line, this point is not of great importance. August 1941 constituted the turning-point for the Communists, for in that month the Danish Government acceded to German demands and enacted a law prohibiting all Communist associations and activities. It ordered the arrest of the three parliamentary representatives of the Party (the arrest of other prominent Communists and the closing-down of the Communist press had been carried through immediately after the German invasion of

1. CID 54942-C

the Soviet Union). Through these enactments the Communists were forced underground, and this circumstance, combined with their Soviet connection and their traditional principal of activism, made them ideal collaborators for the activist front. Three further circumstances increased their usefulness as part of a national front: (a) The Communist Party as an organization was relatively disorganized by reason of the constant threat to its underground existence and the periodical arrests of its members by both Danish and German authorities. Conservative or non-political activists hence did not hesitate to co-operate with individual groups of Communists. (b) The remnants of the Communist organizations followed the Soviet popular front line. The policy of its press, as revealed in its monthly organ, Land og Folk, was very similar to that of the other illegal papers--pro-Danish, anti-German, anti-Nazi--with a stronger tendency to be pro-Russian in the sense of emphasizing the Russian contribution to the war, a theme for which propaganda is supplied by the Russian Legation in Stockholm. (c) The Communists had their strength among the industrial workers, who were precisely the men fit to execute sabotage in industries working on German orders.

The concentration upon the issue of resistance to the exclusion of all other political and social principles thus made loyal collaborators of the Communists and attracted activists to them. Since this attraction reached its height during the

crisis of August 1943 it will be discussed later. What should be noted here is that from the very beginning of their participation in the resistance movement the Communists represented themselves simply as proponents of the national cause of independence from the invader through active resistance.

C. General

The unpolitical character of even those resistance organizations which had Conservative or Communist leadership made it possible for many non-political persons to be organized either in those groups or in separate groups collaborating with them. The chief class of non-political persons to contribute to the leadership of organized resistance was the intellectual--specifically, the professor, La Cour, Chievitz, and Mogens Fog are three professorial names which have been associated with resistance groups of all complexions. Each was accused at various times by the Germans and the Danish government of collaboration with the Communists, and this appears to be justified in that they did act with resistance groups in which Communists were often included. However, in them the spiritual, abstract aspect of the Danish resistance movement--resistance of a nation to an exploiting occupant divorced from positive principles--became articulate. Mogens Fog, the leader of an activist organization of Danish students (Den Danske Studenten), published a series of articles in July 1943 explaining the basis of the opposition of the Danish

activists. He insisted that both the King and the majority of the people were prevented by the collaborationist policy of their government from expressing their true wishes, which were actually represented by the active underground. This Front, he explained, are people of different views and ideals, but unanimous in the conviction that National Socialism is the enemy of culture and that a submission policy to it will endanger the country's future; the German representatives of National Socialism have broken their promise of non-interference and are engaged in the exploitation of Denmark, together with a control which violates Danish independence. He admitted that the Government policy had retained for the Danes a certain restricted freedom of movement and had maintained a relatively high standard of living, especially for the well-to-do classes, but he insisted that the will to fight for Danish freedom and spiritual values was more important. He discarded passive resistance as a weapon and rejected the idea of letting the Allies fight for the Danish cause, on the grounds of "our self-respect and our position in the future"--that is, the Danes must show an active contribution to the fight against Nazism in order to escape the consequences of collaboration when the peace treaty is drawn up. Hence, he concluded, we must strike with all our means at those points where Denmark is being exploited for the benefit of the Axis war machine, and that means we must strike primarily by sabotage. In this work all

classes and parties--including Communists, Conservatives, and "Nationalists"--work together.[1]

Thus, whatever the special interests of specific groups involved--the desire of the Conservatives to broaden their party base as a national party, the determination of the shipping interests to fight for their existence, the pursuit by the Communists of the Soviet European line, the desire of Danish nationalists to take insurance for the eventuality of an Allied victory--the appeal of the resistance groups for national support was made on non-political, non-social lines. It was made simply on the grounds of national liberation from an alien occupant representing an alien system.

There have never been any signs of a split within the underground on the issue of active versus passive resistance. Indeed, the growth of the underground in numbers and in organization paralleled the increase in sabotage, which in turn paralleled the intensified German exploitation of Denmark. In the first two years of occupation, German pressure on the Danish economy was comparatively light, but, in the fall of 1942, German industrial orders took a sharp rise, the degree of German exploitation and control became more visible to the Danes. Sabotage, previously sporadic and unorganized, rose at the same time as Danes joined underground resistance groups and formed sabotage organizations precisely to meet this situation.

---

1. CID 49335-C

Certainly there were adherents of passive resistance in Denmark, but the peculiarity of the German pattern of occupation was such that passive resistance meant legal opposition and therefore inevitably remained within the basic framework of the collaboration policy set up in April 1940. The continued existence of Danish political and social institutions, which the Germans then used in their exploitation and control, meant that those legal institutions were the vehicles of the passive resistance since that resistance was in response to specific German orders. But this in turn implied a vested interest in the existence of those institutions, and this vested interest put limits on the extent of the resistance. Hence administrative bungling, go-slow tactics, etc., which was generally prevalent in Danish institutions concerned with German orders, were always restricted by the constant German threat to violate the integrity of that institution.

The legal resistance outside the Danish institutions also took place within the framework of the basic German pattern of occupation, and took the form of pressure upon those institutions to reject or hinder specific German demands. The outstanding example of this passive, legal resistance was Professor Hal Koch, who controlled the general Danish youth movement by means of his Joint Youth Association, which he formed immediately after the occupation to defend the spiritual freedom of Denmark. In his organization is typified the traditional kind of Danish

leadership which, however much it opposed the Germans and Nazism, saw Danish salvation in the preservation of Danish free institutions and the spirit of national freedom, and opposed any action against the occupant which would jeopardize these safeguards. Thus Koch supported the collaborationist policy of the early Coalition Government, but opposed the Scavenius Government, in which he saw a violation of Danish independence by German pressure. He stimulated patriotism and pride in Danish spiritual values, and called on every occasion for the political coalition to defend Danish freedom against German interference, but he consistently opposed sabotage, calling saboteurs the counter-parts of Danes serving in the German armed forces.[1]

In short, to the minds of men like Koch, activism was a betrayal of the Danish national cause. The spiritual resistance of that cause to National Socialism was sufficient to put Denmark on the Allied side.[2] The traditions of Danish pacifism and institutionalism that gave the leadership of active resistance to the former extremist groups made of all activism an alien cause for the leaders of Danish political and social life. The primary issue in Danish life, then, was not that of resistance as opposed to collaboration, since Danish leaders saw resistance

---

1. Review of the Foreign Press, 16 November 1943.
2. Ibid.

as made possible only by collaboration. The primary issue lay in the concepts associated with resistance. For the leaders, national resistance was inevitably associated with and limited by the preservation of Danish national institutions; for the activists, led by extremists who were tied to no specific historical Danish social force or institution, the idea of national resistance stood alone as a formal, universal, unlimited principle, because for the extremists the defeat of Germany was the necessary condition for any other action on their part whatsoever.[1]

The much-bandied expression, the Danish National Front, which was coined to include both active and passive kinds of resistance and for which 98% of the Danish population was claimed, was the vaguest sort of concept and had no correspondent in reality, for it simply concerned all those who rejected National Socialism and did not distinguish between the active resisters and those who felt they served the Danish cause best by collaboration on the basis of the conditions of April 1940. Actually the relatively free conditions of Danish political and social life, which enabled passive resistance to be legal, turned the whole underground resistance movement over to the activists. The underground movement was thereby spared the activist-passivist controversy which characterized other

---

1. The willingness of the activists, who have nothing to lose, to face the changes involved in the violent overthrow of the conqueror emerges in the statement of one of them: if National Socialism is crushed, "political and social landslides will take place which no one today can estimate." CID 49335-R

occupied countries, and at the same time by reason of their lack of support by important Danish social forces, were spared conflicts over the post-war position of those forces.

III. RESISTANCE SINCE AUGUST 1943

The August crisis tore open the previous German pattern of occupation and laid bare the controls on which it was based, but the situation was carried to no new resolution. The result was that, through the clarification of the picture of the true extent of Danish subjection, many more of the rank and file were driven into the activist underground. On the other hand, by reason of the continued existence of the Danish political and social institutions, the institutional leadership remained incapable of going underground for active resistance and contented themselves with resigning official political direction and with secret planning for the post-war situation on the old coalition basis. By reason of their resignations this political leadership now appears to lay claim to the direction of Danish resistance as a whole. Since, however, there has been no essential change of policy in either sector of the resistance movement, all the former conflicts of the underground with the collaborationists have now been included within the extended framework of the general resistance. These conflicts have been temporarily suspended by the rough division of function, according

to interest, by which the official resistance concerns itself with the post-war situation and the underground with present illegal resistance. Nevertheless, an examination of the present position of the two sections of the resistance shows that the pre-August conflict within the national front continues on the same essential grounds, and has actually been intensified, by reason of (a) the institutionalization of the activist resistance in a central underground organization, (b) the persistence of the old political and social institutions of Denmark in its policy of opposition to active resistance despite the changed pattern of occupation--a development intensified by the development of the active organization into a growing rival institution, and (c) the illusory character of the temporal division of function:

(a) The development in the activist section of the Danish resistance has been in the sphere of organization, not in policy nor in constituents. Denmark's Council of Freedom, whose formation was announced through the Danish illegal press in October 1943, is not, as has been sometimes stated, "at the same time representative of active resistance and of the various political parties";[1] it is simply a central organization for the pre-August resistance groups. This was clearly revealed in

1. CID 58582-C.

the Council's first proclamation: "From the day when the German troops in 1940 occupied our country the will to oppose the Nazis had been alive within the Danish people. Gradually, as the German influence on the country's government increased and the Wehrmacht to an increasing extent tried to exploit our resources in the service of its warfare, a number of movements and publications were started which expressed the people's will to opposition and organized the Danish fight for liberty. This activity had to be carried out in transgression of the emergency legislation which the foreigners have enforced, owing to our Government's and Parliament's compliance. The organs which have thus led the war against the Germans in working for the common aim have supported each other when the opportunity arose but they have not... had a joint leadership. After 29 August, however, the desirability of such an organ has become apparent, partly because our people under the sharpened German measures desire the fight to be carried out with still greater force than heretofore, partly that the most effectual organization is demanded." Reports indicate that the Council actually does represent all shades of activist opinion.[1] Thus the same groupings that led the pre-August active

---

1. CID 30980, 8 April 1944.

resistance are joined in the leadership of the Freedom Council--the Conservatives, the Communists, and the non-politicals. The conservatives are represented by one delegate of the Free Danes and one from the Danish Unity Party (Arne Soerensen, the leader of the Party). The Communists have two representatives on the Council.[1] The non-politicals are represented by three or four men including Mogens Fog. The non-political group probably includes member of other parties--probably Conservatives or young Social-Democrats, since Leftists and Radicals have not participated in activism[2]--but these members in no way represent their parties; the Danish Unity Party and the Communists are the only native political organizations represented as such, with the Conservatives getting a semi-official representation through the Free Dane organization of their former Party leader, Christmas Moeller. No non-activist groups or institutions have representation on the Council.[3] The program of the Council, like its leadership, followed the pre-August pattern; active national resistance on a non-political, non-social basis. The Council thus saw its task as working for "Denmark's liberty to the exclusion of all Party and individual

1. CID 61590. Another report claims the Communists have only one: CID 30980, 8 April 1944.
2. CID 30980, 8 April 1944.
3. Arne Soerensen, writing to Christmas Moeller in January 1944: "Nor should there be anybody else on the Council than people who are really involved in the freedom fight, and who represent groups which are the same. It is, therefore, practically impossible to follow your suggestion that there should be people in it from the old parties. These would be rather unsuitable to join in decisions concerning our present underground war, and they would not dare be involved in anything like that at all...I do not believe these two parts can be united." CID 61590-C

interests," by organizing resistance against the Germans "in all spheres and by all available means," by promoting democratic ideals and opposing Danish Nazis, traitors and opportunists, as well as foreign enemies, and by supplying the population with reliable information through its free press.[1] In the sphere of propaganda the Council also saw its task in the provision of the Free Danes abroad with accurate intelligence from the home front, in order to co-ordinate the British broadcasts with the active resistance groups. In the sphere of active resistance, the most important function of the Council has been the organization of all sabotage activities. It has deprecated the "eye for an eye" attitude which it saw behind unorganized sabotage, the whole underground press, including the Communist, joined in the chorus of disapproval of the "amateur" saboteur, who did not act according to a plan for the most effective hindrance of German exploitation and who often interfered with the true saboteur by exposing the population to reprisals. In this organizational aim, the Council appears to have met with success, for it has been estimated that in November only 20% of the sabotage was unorganized.[2]

(b) The legal resistance group--the official leadership which before August saw Danish resistance as best served through collaboration--likewise continues on its pre-August path. As intimated by Soerensen, it is doing very little for present

1. CID 58582-C
2. Review of the Foreign Press, 21 December 1943.

resistance, largely because the apex of institutional Denmark, the Government, has resigned and has not been replaced, so that this channel of passive resistance has been closed. However, the activity oriented toward the present which they do pursue follows the same lines. This is revealed by the fact that the Ministers still draw their salaries and that both they and the Coalition political leaders in general maintain "considerable contact" with the departmental chiefs who now run the Danish administration.[1] They have studiedly kept their distance from the Freedom Council, since their whole aim is to bring their party organizations safely through the occupation.[2] They have even issued since August new pronouncements against the policy of active resistance. On 2 September 1943 Alsing Andersen, the head of the Social Democratic Party, sent a circular to the Central Board of that Party, to the business committee of cooperating trade unions and to all Social Democratic newspapers, condemning those who disobeyed the Government's appeal for order and committed sabotage as agents of Christmas Moeller, his "chauvinists and Communists"--"the irresponsibles"--blaming them for having caused 29 August, and dissociating the Social Democratic Party from this "catastrophy policy."[3] In January representatives of the five Coalition Parties issued the following declaration making clear their stand on active

---

1. London 929, 18 March 1944; CID 30981, 8 April 1944.
2. CID 30980, 8 April 1944.
3. CID 54942.

resistance: "We reject the method of violence in politics, and we are convinced that the majority of the Danish population is in agreement with us. We therefore express our indignation and our grief over the assaults that have occurred, and we want to emphasize that this tendency must be checked. Danish citizens must not be lawless. A relapse into the vengeful methods of the past must be banned. The Danish people, now and in the future, must build only on the foundation of law and justice."[1]

(c) The attempt has been made to avert open conflict between the organization of active resistance and official Denmark by a temporal division of function. Thus Arne Soerensen declared that the Council "should not be used too much in politics" and that "we shall be careful about expecting any political contribution or task for the Council after the war." The only possible cooperation between the Council and the old parties, he said could be on the basis that "we--with the old politicians at the head--want to work for the rehabilitation of the constitution immediately after the cessation of the occupation, but in matters pertaining to the fight itself, we cannot cooperate with the non-fighting politicians."[2] This compromise has been rendered ineffective by the fact that the old parties do, as we have seen, have a policy as regards the

1. Situation Report (BALTIC-SCANDINAVIA) 29 January 1944.
2. CID 61590 C.

the present--a policy which directly opposes that of the activists--and even more important, by the fact that the Freedom Council, both by providing an institution for the activists and by including party organizations which hope to enter the institutional life of Denmark after the war, do have some orientation toward the future.

The danger to the old parties of the Freedom Council as a rival institution of the future Denmark emerged particularly in the determination of the Council to make plans for the immediate post-war period. In the making of these plans, the Council described itself as "the only authoritative organ able to express its views freely" thereby establishing its own validity in post-war planning over the official leadership.[1] Moreover, the respective contents of the plans of the two groups for the post-war periods show characteristic divergences which follow from their present orientations. Both these points emerged as differences incapable of compromise in the conferences of members of the Freedom Council with representatives of the Conservative and Social Democratic Parties on the post-war situation. The Council representatives agreed to postpone political criticism until after the establishment of normal conditions, but demanded first, the consultation of the activist groups in the official decisions, and secondly, the investigation

1. Review of the Foreign Press 21 December 1943.

of certain members of the pre-occupation government for their actions during the days prior to 9 April 1940, but neither point would the old parties concede.[1] The extent of the divergence between the two groups emerges in the specific plans of each for the immediate post-war period. The plans of the old parties, as drawn up by consultations of the institutions of the Coalition, such as the nine-man parliamentary committee, provide simply for the resumption, during the period between the end of the occupation and the new elections, of the coalition policy of the occupation minus men like Thune Jacobsen, Gunnar Larsen, and Scavenius, who were inserted by direct German pressure. Buhl, the Social Democratic prime minister of the Coalition until November 1942, has been a unanimous choice for leadership of the post-war government, and the other names selected, which include the four major parties, are almost entirely those who have served with the coalition under the Germans. Even Dahlgaard, Minister of Defence before 9 April 1940, is to be included. The only recognition of the role of active resistance during the occupation is through the inclusion of Christmas Moeller or Reventlow in the future Cabinet, the exclusion of Alsing Andersen, because of his circular of September which offended the activist Conservatives (however, his inclusion is still a matter of debate since Buhl and the majority of the Social Democrats insist upon it), and discussions

1. CID 61590-C.

concerning the inclusion of one representative each from the Danish Unity Party and the Communists. Such inclusion, however, appears to depend upon the reconciliation of the groups with the older parties. In any event, reports the liaison man between Christmas Moeller and the Conservative Party in Denmark, the question of the Danish Unity Party and the Communists is only of minor importance, for there is no political problem in Denmark today, in view of the fact that only the four major parties are of any account and they are united.[1] The significant point in this Coalition estimate of the situation is the discounting of activism as a permanent force in the Danish situation, and especially the discounting of its institutionalization in the Freedom Council. Thinking along traditional party lines, the Coalition leaders simply conclude that the events and hardships brought by the occupation have increased the strength of these two political parties, and therefore there should be brought into the Coalition, where they will be dwarfed by the greater and more permanent forces represented by the older parties. The discounting of activism emerges as well in the passive attitude taken to a possible Allied occupation. The politicians "wonder if the Allies will help Denmark in their military operations"; it is realized "that the country will not have much to say during an Allied invasion," but the Government would be willing to work during an Allied occupation, and "would give

1. CID 61590-C

the Allies a good reception if they allowed the Danes to manage themselves as much as possible" during the occupation.[1] Thus, while the Coalition forces would welcome an Allied invasion because it would free them from the German menace to their institutions, the attitude to the Allied occupant is passive and almost neutral. The Coalition forces will serve in the Danish administration under the Allies to protect their institutions just as they served under the Germans.

The reports on the political plans of the Coalition parties make no mention of any intentions on war criminals. While it is to be expected that they will probably institute proceedings against Danish Nazis and their armed formations for specific crimes of violence, it is at the same time clear that these forces which themselves appeased the Germans in specific cases in order to save the structure of their organizations will hardly prosecute other collaborators who can claim duress. The Freedom Council, however, which, as the institution of activism, brought forth its plan for the immediate post-war period, devotes the bulk of it to the establishment of standards for the punishment of war criminals. Following the characteristic activist line, the Council is not concerned with the specific organizations which are to rule in the post-war era, but rather with tasks which must be fulfilled. However--and this is a decisive point--

1. CID 61590-C.

the nature of the tasks are so defined as to rule out the old collaborationist institutions and to postulate the entrance of new institutions organized for action. Thus, according to the Council's plan, the Government appointed by the King immediately after the cessation of the German occupation, is simply to clear the ground for the new parliamentary elections by imprisoning of the Danish Nazis, suspension of the officials who have favored the enemy, abrogation of all emergency legislation introduced by German orders or in German interests, liberation of all prisoners held under emergency legislation for "activities in the national interest."[1] Thus, whereas the Coalition parties envisage an interim government preceding elections to last for at least six months and perhaps a year and to have general powers, the Council emphasizes the immediate re-introduction of democracy after a very short period of emergency government with set, limited, negative functions. The basis of this difference is evidently that the Coalition parties see in the post-war disposition a continuation of their mandate on the old conditions, whereas the activists see the post-war era as the scene of new conditions brought about by the rise during the war of activism as an important, permanent, and revolutionary factor, for the action of which the ground must be cleared as soon as possible. It should be noted, in addition, that the

1. Supplement in News Digest 1309. 6 December 1943.

Council takes no account of the probability of an Allied occupation. This is probably because, as representative of Denmark's active war against Germany, the Council assumes an Allied status and hence postulates Danish self-government even if the Allies do fight in Denmark. Hence the Danes can re-introduce democracy through parliamentary elections almost immediately. The immediate task of the new Parliament will be the hunting out of the criminals, the profiteers, the collaborators of the German occupation. The criminals are to include: (1) Those guilty of, or accessory to, the violation of Danish self-government and principles of justice during the occupation, and those who have derived personal gain from the country's bondage. This is to apply to the members of the Government and the elected bodies who by their attitude before and during the occupation have contributed to bring the country under German domination. Thus in this article the Council throws the whole Coalition policy of passive resistance through collaboration into doubt. "It is a matter for the Danish people to decide whether the policy was justified or not." (2) Officials who by un-national behavior, weakness, or compliance have favored the enemy. (3) Representatives of the press, the arts, education, broadcasting and communal activities, who have given moral support to the Occupying Power and to the National Socialists. (4) Business men who have exploited the State of

Emergency in Denmark for their personal gain. Here the Council makes a direct attack on the argument of duress--the argument that collaboration was necessary to save the institution. "It should be stressed that, up to 29 August 1943 there was no obligation on industrialists, contractors and wholesalers to produce or deliver goods to Germany. Many have tried to make out that they acted under compulsion, but this does not hold good.....The fact that a firm national attitude is possible has been proved by a number of industrialists who have in fact succeeded in avoiding deliveries to Germany." The Council concludes that all profits for goods delivered on the German account should be confiscated and used to diminish the loss to the Danish community from the German exploitation. It should be stressed here that this attitude of the Council to business men means the undermining of the whole Danish institutional theory of collaboration in every sphere. (5) National Socialists and their followers, who have joined enemy forces, collaborated with the Germans before and after 9 April 1940, received monetary payment from the Germans for anti-democratic activities, and have acted as informers or taken part in violence against Danish citizens.

The Council does not think of its post-war plan as something extra-legal. It explicitly emphasizes that punitive measures against these persons "must be in conformity with the deep-rooted Danish sense of justice, and must be applied in a

lawful manner in order to prevent people from taking the law into their own hands." The Council thus envisages the activist principle represented by its post-war plan as an integral part of the Danish post-war life, and not as something temporary, a slight hangover of the war with which it should end.

This conflict between the old vested institutions and the potentially new one in the post-war period emerges sharply in the opposition of their respective military organizations. There are "official" and "unofficial" military preparations developing independently of each other. The "official"military is organized by high-ranking army and navy officers in collaboration with the police and the leading politicians. This military organization appears to be a continuation of the Danish armed forces which were dissolved 29 August 1943 after having existed quietly under German occupation for three years. Its functions are not considered by its leaders to be military since it is not designed for present action; it is intended to take over police functions in Denmark after the withdrawal of the Germans. In conformity with the general policy of the official resistance, the preparatory activity of this military branch is not underground in Denmark, but openly in Sweden, where police training camps have been established and supplies of arms arranged for. The unofficial military organization consists of numerous voluntary groups which appear to be simply special organizations

of the active resistance movement. These groups appear to be spontaneous but the Freedom Council is organizing contact with them. It has been estimated that the Council is in touch with such groups totalling 10,000 men in Copenhagen alone.[1] The press of the organized resistance is exhorting all Danes to join in this unofficial military preparation for the day of invasion, and to consider themselves part of the "Danish Army of Liberation." It announces that orders for action will be given by the Freedom Council and transmitted by the London radio.[2] The unofficial groups mistrust the official organization because they are in favor of military action against the Germans when the time is ripe and they fear that the official group, judged on the basis of its past actions, will not support such a program. The official military organization, on the other hand, is convinced that the activist armed groups are under the control of the Communists; they feel that the growth of activism is a growth of Communistic principles on the pre-war style and they fear a Communist coup at the end of the war. The Freedom Council, which is in contact with both organizations, is trying to bring about an understanding.[3]

The present situation of the general resistance movement in Denmark emerges then in the following pattern. The older institutional life of Denmark finds itself, in its struggle to maintain the integrity of the traditional institutions with

---

1. CID 61590-C
2. CID 63323-S
3. CID 54942-C and CID 61590-C

which it hopes to continue the pre-war pattern of slow, moderate progress, confronted by an activism which not only threatens the existence of all Danish institutions by its present activity against the Germans, but by its own institutionalization threatens to introduce activism as a permanent, rival element in Danish life after the war. This fear for their future institutional life is all the stronger since the activists are almost entirely younger people,[1] a fact which may lead to a real social cleavage. The older institutions fear change since they are the "have" parties, they wish to return to the pre-war status in which they possessed a practical monopoly of Danish social and political forces. The activist groups, on the other hand, which had no real backing in Denmark before the war, wish to perpetuate the activist principle strengthened by the war and therefore welcome the transformations their present resistance policy will bring in the post-war scene. Their insistence upon the quick re-establishment of democracy is not for the pre-war Danish kind of democracy but for the establishment of a tabula rasa from which the activist principle they represent can develop on the basis of the strength it has gained during the occupation. These groups plump for activism as a bare, formal principle, since it is only on this principle that they can cooperate and that they have gained the

1. CID 30980, 8 April 1944.

force they now have in Danish life. It is to their championship of this principle that the gains which have accrued to the two formal political organizations represented as such in the active resistance--the Danish Unity Party and the Communist Party--is to be attributed. Indeed, the very fact that the Freedom Council has declined to associate itself with political principles has driven accessions to the movement into the arms of the political organizations within it, especially since these organizations have themselves carefully modelled their attitude on the non-political policy of the Council. Christmas Moeller's peculiar position as a Party leader without a party organization, since that organization has committed itself to the passive Coalition party, makes it difficult to assess the increase of strength of the Conservatives. However, since Moeller keeps in constant touch with the Coalition groups and is accepted by them as part of the Coalition for the post-war period, the problems involved in the increase of his strength do not overly concern the politicians. The two extremist parties are the groups that are of concern to them.

The Danish Unity Party has increased its rolls especially from middle-class and clerical groups, and Soerensen insists that this increase is to the extent of seven seats in the Lower House (which would mean 10 seats for the Danish Unity Party in

the next election).[1] He estimates a similar gain for the Communists. The gains of the Communist Party have been from labor,[2] and from the young Social Democrats.[3] In both cases the primary causes appear to be admiration for the Russian war effort and dissatisfaction with the passive role of the Social Democratic Party and its concern for its own organization at a time when the laboring class has been the hardest hit of any by the rising cost of living and emergency legislation involving the prohibition of strikes. Danish army officers in Sweden estimate that the Communists now have a strength of 100,000 in Denmark.[4] The older vested groups in Denmark have assumed that this increase of strength for the activist principle means an increase for the positive pre-war programs of the radical organizations to whose benefit the activist increase has redounded. Thus the Social Democrats and the labor organizations have recently emphasized the danger of Communism in general, and specifically in Denmark after the war.[5] The regular party Conservatives, including their youth organization have likewise been creating a Red scare whose origins appear to be in certain middle-class business circles. This scare has extended to Danish military circles, who are frightened by the spectre of 30,000 armed Communists attempting a coup to seize power at the end of the war and who appear to be

---

1. CID 61590-C
2. CID 54942-C
3. Ibid.
4. CID 54942-C
5. Ibid.

training the Danish police corps in Sweden with an eye to its suppression.[1] Admiral Vedel, the head of the Danish military, has even been forced to issue orders to his people that they are not to use the Red bogey as a basis of collecting people for their post-war police organization,[2] and the Freedom Council itself is trying, in the interests of the harmony of the resistance, to reconcile the Communist and the military groups.[3]

It is difficult to assess how far these fears that the increase of strength of the activists mean an increase for the positive political and social concepts of the groups that support them is justified, since these groups have not recruited on the basis of these concepts. Certainly the social origins of the new accessions to both extreme right and extreme left do not contradict a possible movement to the extreme right and the left in positive political ideas, since the middle classes and the clergy which have adhered to the Danish Unity Party have proved susceptible in the past to an active conservative nationalism, while the accession of a fraction of labor and Social Democracy to the Communists can easily go along with a movement to the left. Neither group has given any indication of a positive post-war policy. Indeed, Soerensen has aimed his post-war program specifically at the "non-political

1. CID 54942-C
2. CID 61590-C
3. Ibid.

patriots" and his statement of it consists of meaningless generalities congregated around the word "democracy" and with "energetic" the favorite adjective.[1] The one concrete indication of post-war policy which Soerensen does give, however, is wholly in line with the nationalistic past of the Danish Unity Party: he proposes the moving of the Danish border to the Eider, which involves the cession of the whole of South Schlesvig by Germany to Denmark.[2] The chief indication of Communist future policy arises from continued contact with the Soviet Union. While this contact suffers considerably from the practical difficulties of the occupation, and the Soviet legation in Sweden does not appear to be well informed about the Danish situation, still several Danish Communists visit the legation, and the Communist Party in Denmark is supplied with propaganda material by it.[3] The future policy of the Communist Party, then, will depend upon the Soviet line for Europe. All that can be concluded so far is that the pronouncements of the Party in Denmark are studiously concerned with ideas which are generally popular in that country--with nationalism and with democracy. The concern with democracy will at the same time clear the ground for whatever line is decided upon after the war. The aim of the Communists now is simply penetration, the building up of support for a future policy. In view of the present disorganization of the Communist Party in Denmark, and of the fact that

---

1. CID 61590-C
2. Ibid., This has been a traditional demand of Danish Nationalists.
3. CID 54942-C

Communists do not occupy an outstanding place in the sabotage organizations in Denmark as they do in other countries, by reason of superior capability, together with the fact of the important place held by the non-politicals in the active resistance,[1] the policy of building its organization on the formal activist principle as opposed to taking a strong stand on positive issues is tactically shrewd. Only a small minority of Trotskyites, in opposition to the Communist leadership and majority appear to be planning for a communist coup.[2]

Thus the principle of activism, that is, of radical action, represented before the war only by small, unimportant groups on the extreme right and extreme left, has grown into a force to be reckoned with through an unpolitical resistance to a foreign oppressor, and some of this force has been channellized into the groups through the central non-political resistance organization. Whether these new accessions to activism will be permanent and, joined to positive principles of radical parties, will become a new institution in Danish life, will depend largely upon the situation after the war, as affected by the occupation and by the action of the activists during that occupation. Until, however, a situation favorable to positive radical principles emerges, the activist parties are building up their organizations on the general idea of an

---

1. CID 54942-C
2. CID 65637-S.

active, fluid democracy which will leave the way open for the penetration of radical principles when the time is ripe. The only positive political and social principles with force in Denmark today remains those of the established institutions, which hopes to bear them unchanged into the post-war world.

Probable Conclusions on Post-War Denmark

The line-up of forces in post-war Denmark can be conjectured only on the basis of an alternative. The alternative concerns the future material conditions of Danish life, which in turn will depend primarily upon the extent of military operations on Danish soil. If the Danish economic life emerges from the occupation and the war with only peripheral damage and the relatively easy prosperous economic relations of all classes are quickly resumed, then the pre-war pattern of forces will continue on the path it has never left, even during the occupation. The traditional organizations have been maintained intact in structure and philosophy precisely for this purpose. The forces of activism, born as a real power during the extraordinary conditions of the occupation, will subside with the return to a comfortable "normalcy." The radical parties on the right and left which have participated in the active resistance will appeal to this fact for support, but will probably temporarily suspend their pre-war principles in order to keep their increased strength. They will probably play the moderate game and participate in coalition governments. On the right, the conservatives will do this, because their aim in the years before the war has been precisely the building up of a large party organization as a broad a base as possible for defensive purposes, i.e., against the reforms of the Social Democrats. The Communists

will do it, because the probable Soviet line is based on penetration through organization on the basis of adaptation of principles to local conditions. The punishment of war criminals, including those responsible for the debacle of 9 April 1940 will probably not be emphasized in these conditions. Immediate trials of Danish Nazis will probably be held to mollify the war-born activist feelings, but there will be no official drive against collaborationists.

However, should the Danish economy suffer, as the result of the future prosecution of the war, the irreparable dislocation for which the radical parties are hoping and acting, a constellation characterized by political and social tension and the rise of new organized forces will result. The new forces will be those which flock to the activist standard already raised during the worsened conditions of occupation. The radical dynamic conservatives will develop towards a neo-Fascism which includes some principle of social reform and strong elements of agrarian nationalism. The historic moderate institutions will attempt desperately to maintain the old conditions, but will lose forces to both extremes--probably more to the right than to the left, given the predominance of Danish agriculture in the economy and of the middle-holder in the agriculture.[1] The Communists will absorb those workers who are embittered by

---

1. Note that the Danish Unity Party has received support during occupation from the People's High Schools, which are widely attended by the farmers.

the new conditions and break away from the Social Democratic unions and Party unless the Communist Party is limited too much by the Moscow popular front line for Europe, to remain unqualifiedly on the left with a fraction of the workers. In that case, the activist accessions among the workers may break from the Communists and, dispairing of political action, form a syndicalist group.

In any circumstance, the foreign orientation of the post-war groups will probably be a constant. The Coalition groups will again follow the path of Danish agricultural interests to the west and of Danish industrial interests to the south, and pursue a balanced course between Great Britain and Germany. Under Christmas Moeller's probable leadership in foreign affairs, the Danish Government will lean more towards Great Britain for the immediate post-war period. Within the Coalition, the Conservatives will advocate a strong national defense, the Social Democrats may well continue their championship of disarmament. The Danish Unity Party will press for a strong armed force tied to none of the major powers but bound with the other Nordic countries. The Communists will advocate following the leadership of Russia in an international organization and will oppose any regional federation.

In general, it more probable that Danish conditions will follow the first alternative--i.e., the continuance of the

traditional, moderate Denmark--than the second.[1] In spite of the capitalistic nature of Danish farming, that is, its widespread market connections, the predominance of the middle farmer and the cooperative movement gives it stability. Moreover the radical parties will be too concerned with building up their organizations and therefore with following the trend of opinion to drive it to extremes.

---

1. Note the elections of March 1943, in which, after three years of collaboration, the Coalition was given increased mandates. The Social Democratic Party received the largest number of seats ever attained by a Danish party.